

To whom it may concern,

Opportunities for the Norwegian private sector to do business with UNOPS

a. How procurement works in the UN

The UN System covers a wide variety of organizations whose procurement activities differ as a result of their mandates and policy goals. Their combined procurement volume is approx. **\$20 billion per year** of a wide range of goods and services *[see below for more details]*.

UN organizations' procurement activities are governed by their own procurement procedures (see for example the UNOPS Procurement Manual), however these are all similar and follow **essential public procurement principles** such as best value for money; fairness, integrity and transparency; and effective competition. UN organizations **collaborate and harmonize** their practices and approaches as much as possible through the work of the High-Level Committee on Management Procurement Network (HLCM PN). This Procurement Network is part of the larger High-Level Committee on Management which is currently chaired by UNOPS Executive Director, Ms. Grete Faremo.

The UN expects its suppliers to operate with **high standards of ethical conduct** and that they adopt the United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct. Suppliers that engage in proscribed practices (e.g. fraud, corruption, etc.) may be sanctioned further to a common UN policy on vendor sanctions. Furthermore, UN organizations are increasingly adopting **sustainable procurement** practices, i.e. those that integrate requirements, specifications and criteria that are compatible and in favour of the protection of the environment, of social progress and in support of economic development.

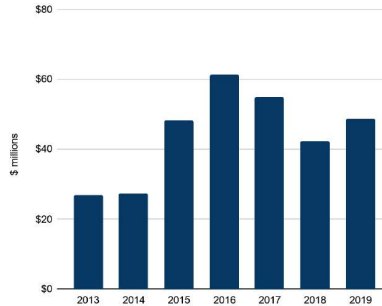
The majority of the UN organizations' **business opportunities are competitively tendered** and are posted on the **United Nations Global Marketplace (UNGM)**, the common procurement portal of the UN system. An increasing number of UN organizations are using **e-tendering systems** to manage their procurement processes (e.g. UNOPS eSourcing system).

There are a number of resources available to suppliers interested in doing business with the UN, including the **UNGM knowledge centre on Doing Business with the UN** and specifically for UNOPS we have an **online course** on "How to do business with UNOPS". In addition, the **International Procurement Seminars (IPS)**, also known as Multi-Agency Business Seminars, are opportunities to learn more about the UN organizations and allow for one-to-one meetings between UN organizations and potential suppliers. These are regularly arranged with companies from Nordic countries, including Norway. Previous Nordic Procurement Seminars were held in 2016, 2018 and 2021.

b. Norwegian business with the UN/UNOPS - Areas of common interest

UNOPS publishes the **Annual Statistical Report on United Nations Procurement (ASR)** on behalf of the UN system. It is based on procurement data from almost 40 UN entities. Full details, including interactive dashboards to explore the data, can be found at www.ungm.org/asr. The total procurement volume of participating UN organizations was **almost \$20 billion in 2019** - an increase of \$1.1 billion compared to 2018. The top categories of products and services procured by the UN in 2019 were as follows: Pharmaceuticals, Contraceptives and Vaccines - \$3.2 billion; Transportation, Storage and Mail Services - \$2.7 billion; Food and Beverage Products - \$2.1 billion; Management and Administrative Services - \$1.8 billion; and Building and Maintenance Services - \$1.4 billion.

Nordic suppliers accounted for \$720 million (or 3.6 per cent) of this procurement volume in 2019. **\$49 million of this was procurement from Norwegian suppliers**. This represented a 15 per cent increase compared to the previous year (see chart below).



In 2019, 25 different UN entities procured goods and services from suppliers in Norway. The **top procurement categories from Norwegian suppliers** were: Engineering and Research Services - \$9.2 million; Land, Building and Structures - \$8.9 million; and Transportation, Storage, Mail Services - \$5.3million. The **top 3 suppliers** from Norway to the UN in 2019 were: O.B. WIIK AS (\$8.9 million), EMPTOR INTERNATIONAL AS (\$8.3 million), MARLINK AS (\$5.7 million).

UNOPS procured \$447k from Norwegian suppliers in 2019. This included \$300k worth of Management Information Services. The relatively low UNOPS procurement from Norwegian suppliers compared to other organizations is in part due to **limited interest and activity by suppliers in UNOPS tenders**. Since 2018, only four suppliers have submitted a bid in a UNOPS tender in the eSourcing system, and in a total of six tenders. **UNOPS is interested in expanding its supplier base** on all its categories and welcomes increased participation from Norwegian companies, with a particular focus on sustainable and innovative solutions. Since 2018 UNOPS and **Innovation Norway** have increased cooperation to facilitate a dialogue between UNOPS and Norwegian companies in an effort to increase understanding of the needs of the field on one hand, and the solutions the Norwegians companies have to offer. This has included several events and business delegation visits to UN City Copenhagen and a forthcoming Private Sector Dialogue (see below).

As such, **UNOPS encourages Norwegian suppliers** to: 1) attend the next iteration of the Nordic Procurement Seminar (dates to be confirmed); 2) complete the online course on “How to do business with UNOPS”; 3) review data about historical procurement by UNOPS and other UN organizations on the ASR website; 4) check UNOPS’ planned procurement activity via the procurement plans dashboard shared on the Current Opportunities page (the dashboard is updated twice per year and the next update will take place in Spring 2021); 5) ensure they are registered on UNGM, which is required in order to submit a response to a UNOPS tender (optionally, suppliers may subscribe to the Tender Alert Service on UNGM to be informed once a new UNOPS tender is posted); 6) share their innovative solutions through the UNOPS Possibilities Portal and through the UNOPS Global Innovation Centres.

Beyond procurement, UNOPS and the Government of Norway work together on **project implementation** throughout the world. UNOPS is currently implementing/has recently implemented projects on behalf of the Government of Norway in all five key areas of Norway’s Strategic Priorities of Development Cooperation. **Education**: UNOPS supports partners with access to education, reconstruction of schools and managing scholarship programmes. See for ex. Reconstruction of 46 classrooms in Nepal on behalf of Norway. **Health**: UNOPS has strong capacity to deliver health services, from constructing hospitals and clinics to procuring medical equipment. Examples of recent cooperation include also Covid-19 response in the Balkans and in Myanmar. **Private Sector Development, Agriculture and Renewable Energy**: UNOPS has a multitude of experience in supporting socio-economic development and local economies, agriculture and renewable energy. Eg. with Norway’s funding UNOPS is currently supporting the socio-economic development in Montenegro. Also, UNOPS Global Innovation Centres play a pivotal role in private sector development. **Climate, Environment and Oceans**: UNOPS works to protect the environment with an increasing focus on the Oceans and SIDS. The environment is in fact the largest sector of delivery of UNOPS to Norway. We are proud of our cooperation for example in Indonesia where we are currently restoring together 24 million hectares of peatlands. Moreover, UNOPS also supports Norway’s ambition to promote the Oceans/SIDS agenda. This includes not only the upcoming Global Innovation Center in Norway focused on Ocean technology and Blue economy (see below for more) but also our cooperation in organizing Our Oceans Conference in Palau in 2021, and UNOPS being the Project Manager of the Ocean Festival organised in June 2019 in Antigua and Barbuda (both events were in part funded by Norway). **Humanitarian Assistance, including crisis and emergency**: UNOPS services across emergency infrastructure, procurement and HR help partners deliver strong and efficient humanitarian responses. For example recently, besides our common work on Covid-19 response, UNOPS and Norway have contributed together to relieving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, as well as the promotion of economic growth and reduction in drivers of the conflict in Gaza.

Moreover, **UNOPS has a strong presence in all of the priority countries of Norwegian Development Aid.** The same applies for locations of **Innovation Norway's offices** in developing countries/emerging markets (eg. Kenya, Brazil, Balkans (Croatia), India, South Korea, United Arab Emirates, Vietnam). This provides an excellent setting for increased cooperation with the private sector as well. Moreover, UNOPS understands that Norwegian companies have a strong service and supply offering in all of the above mentioned sectors, all of which UNOPS works in.

c. Potential private sector partnerships between UNOPS and Norway

In 2021, together with the five Nordic Trade Promotion organisations (Innovation Norway, Danish Trade Council, Business Sweden, Business Iceland and Business Finland), UNOPS is organising a series of online **UNOPS-Nordic Private Sector Dialogues** directed to Nordic companies. The Dialogues that will consist of a stage setting session followed by three region-specific sessions (Balkans, East Africa, Asia) will provide a neutral meeting place to exchange information about the needs in the field as well as different Nordic solutions with the aim to form New Partnerships for the SDGs. More specifically the dialogues aim to: 1) establish a strong Nordic TPO collaboration that works efficiently together with UNOPS; 2) increase Nordic collaboration in terms of delivering innovative and sustainable solutions to UNOPS and the UN-system in general; 3) encourage B2B partnerships between Nordic companies; 4) enhance companies' understanding of UNOPS' operations on the ground and the challenges faced while providing UNOPS knowledge of existing/planned solutions; 5) increase TPOs and companies' knowledge on sector-specific areas related to UNOPS' operations; 6) increase the number of Nordic company submitting their solutions through the UNOPS Possibilities Portal and the Global Innovation Challenges; 7) inspire more Nordic companies to work towards solving challenges in developing countries together with local communities and partners.

On **innovation**, negotiations for a UNOPS Global Innovation Centre to Norway are underway. The **UNOPS GIC Norway** would be focused on Ocean technology and Blue economy acting as a central hub nationally, regionally and globally for ideas, and solutions focused on Oceans. For more on UNOPS' approach to innovation, incl. Global Innovation Centres and Challenges please read more here.

Moreover, UNOPS is currently managing a **PIF Fund** (Private Sector Investment Facility Fund) on behalf of the Finnish government, and stands ready to support also Norwegian companies through Norway's similar private sector instruments. PIF financing is a form of concessional investment credit and as such one of the Finnish government's private sector instruments. Its **purpose** is to provide financial support for developing countries' public sector investments that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that make use of Finnish technology and know-how. Furthermore, the instrument is created with the purpose of getting the Finnish private sector on board to meet the vast investment needs required by Agenda 2030. The PIF Fund managed by UNOPS covers activities in the PIF target countries with the objective to support, advise, and/or build capacity of the target countries in the correct application of international procurement rules. The fund is also able to finance project management and infrastructure activities related to the PIF projects.

Furthermore, **UNOPS Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment (S3i)** initiative provides private sector investors with opportunities to generate financial returns, while ensuring their contributions are making a positive social, environmental and economic impact. Besides investment opportunities, the large-scale projects implemented by the S3i also offer interesting opportunities for suppliers.

All in all, in the interest of enlarging its supplier base as well as in an effort to establish partnerships for the SDGs, UNOPS is keen on deepening the dialogue with the Norwegian private sector both directly as well as through key organisations such as Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises and Innovation Norway. With reference to the above, we look very much forward to continuing our discussion on collaboration to see how UNOPS and Norwegian enterprises can best collaborate for the 2030 Agenda.

Yours sincerely,



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United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and UNOPS Executive Director



Ole Erik Almlid
Executive Director
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